TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE Transcriber's Office FLOOR DEBATE

February 24, 2006 LB 732, 1019

Omaha system or in the Nebraska system, they're still teaching Nebraska kids. I'm not asking for us to give anything extra to the Omaha teachers. I'm simply saying that if the Legislature determines that a contribution has to be made to the Nebraska state teachers, that a similar contribution would be made to the Omaha teachers. I think it's fair that we treat them, these similarly situated individuals, similarly. We need to treat them equally, and that's what I'm advocating for here. gentlemen who runs the...he's the executive director of the Omaha School Employees' Retirement System, his name is Michael Smith, and my legislative aide handed me his statement regarding the bill and I just wanted to read that to you so it's a little clearer what I'm asking for. I'm not asking for additional I'm simply saying let's treat the Omaha teachers similarly to the state teachers. Mr. Smith, in his testimony in front of the committee...and, again, he came on behalf of the Omaha Public Schools and the Omaha School Employees' Retirement System in support of LB 732, which is now AM2350: Sixty years ago, the Nebraska Unicameral implemented a retirement system for school employees in Nebraska--the Nebraska School Employees' Retirement System, which included a service annuity. year of 1945, the Omaha Public Schools had already begun providing retirement benefits for 36 years, having begun its retirement plan in 1909. The Unicameral specified that the new service annuity was to be paid to all school employees throughout the state, including those employed by the Omaha Public Schools, because it was to be paid from general revenues, rather than member and school district contributions. So there is a clear historical precedence for this. At that time, school employees could look forward to receiving a dollar per month in service annuity benefits for each year of work they performed. Twenty years ago, the Unicameral recognized an additional funding need in the Nebraska School Employees' Retirement As a result, the Unicameral passed legislation authorizing that seven-tenths of 1 percent of the compensation of all members of the Nebraska School Employees' Retirement System be contributed each year. Again, realizing that these contributions were being made from general revenues--monies collected from taxpayers throughout the state--legislators authorized that this same seven one-hundredths of 1 percent of payroll also be contributed to the teachers that happen to teach